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BY
EDNA DE FREMERY

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CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
Spring.....	9
Rome	10
How Many Ways.....	11
A Gift.....	12
Adieux.....	13
Masquerade.....	14
Parting.....	15
Sister Dolores.....	16
An Alter.....	17
Retrospection.....	18
Anticipation.....	19
The Sun King.....	20
Sea Voices.....	21
Vallombrosa	22
Venice	23
Annunciation.....	24
Palestine.....	25
Hope.....	26
Wanderlust.....	27
Thy People.....	28
Kismet.....	29
If, After Day.....	30
A Dream.....	31
To My Mother.....	32

SPRING

I.

I lived within a city street
Where never lingered sunbeam fleet
Or happy singing bird.
But close outside my window grew
A stunted, sickly tree that knew
Spring's innocence had stirred,
And putting forth a first pale shoot
Of tender green, defied the soot.

II.

My heart had lived in darkness, till
Like Spring upon the window-sill
Love bade me live anew.
So, in gold vapours of the dawn
New life into my heart was born—
New life that was for you.
It flowered on my lips, a word—
All trembling, faint, but still, you heard.

ROME

I.

Noon, and the summer blue Italian skies
Thrilling the hour—
There under sad purple cypress, lies
A white flower.

II.

Bells through the golden air, to prayer calling—
A fountain's voice.
Sounds in an antique garden, falling, falling
Its tears, rejoice.

III.

You, that were all to me, living, dying—
Love, hope, and all—
Dear, you are free from earth's sorrow, and
sighing,
But my tears fall.

HOW MANY WAYS

I.

How many ways do I love you, dear?
Tell me, how many leaves there be
Ere the winds set free from the orchard's gold
The million minted leaves that hold
The carvings of eternity—
So many ways do I love you, dear.

II.

How many ways do I love, again?
Tell me, how many tears there are
In a world in chains, of war's bitter pains
Sending its crimson across the main—
And crying up to a burning star
So many ways do I love, again.

A GIFT

I.

A royal gift, you have bestowed on me
Oh my beloved. What my lips may give
In whispered gratitude will ever live
Deep in my heart. Your gift has made me see
Beyond the known, into infinity—
New vision to my eyes that used to grieve
O'er the dull pattern that my hands must
weave
In woof of frieze, upon Life's tapestry.
Now, on my loom, love blossoms like a star
That trembles in illimitable night
Like shining words God whispers from afar—
Your gold thread, for my flax, will now requite
Oh beautiful the fabric, in my sight—
Beyond the power of life, or death to mar.

ADIEUX

I.

Never the sickle moon
In the sky,
Never the rose of May,
Ere it die,
Will bring at evening, still,
Aught, to my window-sill
But grief, and falling tears.
Through the long, lonely years
Love, will not die.

MASQUERADE

I

Do you remember, how, a year ago
I came to you, in an old fashioned gown?
The pale moon in the sky hung low
The light of the candles had burned down—
I half feared your frown for my fanciful dress
But now, I know, you loved me so.

II.

The flowers I held in my bouquet
Were sweet red roses and mignonette
They were the first to hear you say
What they, nor I, will e'er forget.
Their breath was a delicate perfume
That filled the room.

III.

We said that we two would love for aye
As long as winds should kiss the sea
As long as flowers seek the sun
We promised to love, for eternity—
Ah, don't you see, 'twas on a night of mas-
querade
Our vows were made?

PARTING

I.

Parting is like death, they say—
Yet no flowers cover me
And the shadows on my head
Fall not, from cypress tree.
Green is the spring about me
With jeweled rain drops set
And I, with tears, remember—
Do you, afar, forget?

SISTER DOLORES

I.

As that scarred hill, which yesterday was green
So, I, my Lord, in this dark garb of woe
Unnatural, that shrouds me, as I go—
Bear outward witness, to the soul thou'st
seen.

The silence! Ah the silence prisons thought—
And consciousness but mocks this show of
death

This apeing of tranquillity my breath
Denies. When singing birds in snares are
caught

Surely their wings, that beat against the bars
Cannot be music to God's listening ear.

If I did grievous sin, who only loved brave
youth—

Bright flowers and sunshine and the happy
truth

Of laughter, that is holier than tears
Then no bird's song, should rise up, 'neath the
stars.

AN ALTAR

I.

I raised an altar in my heart
And worshipped there—
I held it sacred and apart
From daily care
And thoughts were flowers offered there
And for sweet incense, rose my prayer.

II.

What matters it, if gods have flown
And no one hears?
This sacrifice must fain atone—
And falling tears
Wipe out the memory of hurts unseen—
And love remain, where faith has never been.

RETROSPECTION

I.

After long years, to see again—
The house I shared with youth—
How small the windows, whose narrow panes
I thought looked out on truth.

II.

How steep the stairs, and strict the door
That will not yield to me—
I should have turned back long before,
Truth was within, you see.

ANTICIPATION

I.

I pray that the day will die,
Will faint, in the arms of night—
That the first star in the sky
May show me its holy light.

II.

I pray that the haste of youth
Life's joy, and fever, and pain
May be hushed, in love's great truth
Nor call to my soul, again.

THE SUN KING

I.

Lord of the wastes—the royal sun
Scatters his largesse on the sands—
Under the shade of the date palms, run
Timid shadows, who fear his hand.

II.

The desert burns in triumphant light—
Yielding a dream to one adored—
Her gifts are roses, red, and white
And golden silence, for her lord.

SEA VOICES

I.

Beyond the light of the headland bar—
Beyond the city's iron grasp—
Where the gray smoke turns to a crimson mar,
And black masts twist in the harbor's clasp.

II.

There, under heaven, and free from earth—
The great winds sing, in an ecstasy
Of mighty freedom, and swift rebirth
In sea songs of eternity.

VALLOMBROSA

I.

Once more, in Vallombrosa, under the moon
Hung in the skies,
Like a silver lamp, lit too soon
Ere the day dies.

II.

On the terrace, gray, marble, and moss grown
Red roses fall—
Sweet is their fragrance, faint, and I hear a lone
Nightingale's call.

III.

Why should all other things, be fair and the
same?
You are not here.
If from that other world, you would but speak
my name
My dear, my dear.

VENICE

I.

Ah, Venice, fairest city of the seas—
Lying with golden light upon your spires
You are the vision of my happiest ease
You are the very dream of my desires.

II.

With my own eyes, I may not look on you
Or learn the azure winding of your ways—
But in my home bound heart a thought sings
 true
No miles can hide you from my spirit's gaze.

ANNUNCIATION

I.

A summer noon, in Nazareth of old—
And in a garden, dreamed a Maid,
Around Her, nodding lilies, starred with gold,
And pure white doves, with coral feet, had
strayed.

II.

From out the village, came the sound and calls
Of children, playing in the dusty street,
But in the garden holy silence falls,
And God's bright angels, kneel at Mary's feet.

PALESTINE

I.

Twilight, before the hills of Palestine
Sad colored, like the lives of saints,
Stretching their pure and mystic line
Toward the east, where daylight faints.

II.

Age old, and melancholy rocks
A guarding shepherd, faintly heard—
Calling his white fleeced, patient flocks
Are these the echo of thy Word?

HOPE

I.

You will come back to me, some day, I know—
Whether the years, or death, shall keep apart
Our lives for earth's brief span. In every heart
God's placed his touchstone, Hope. The sea
birds go

Daring abysmal depths, and starless night
Fearless, before the ruthless winds of heaven—
That wound, and buffet them, while still,
storm driven

They breast the sky, to find home in their
flight.

There is no meanest creature on the earth
But can, for love, be noble and be brave.
You will come back to me, some day, I know
And in the crucible of years, I'll save
All worthy things of bravery and mirth,
Mixed with the tears you would not have me
show.

WANDERLUST

I.

A silver path through the Golden Gate
The salty breath of the open sea—
I ask no more of the winds of Fate,
Than to fly before them, and so, be free.

II.

To sail to the lands of far away
O'er changing waters, of blue and green
To touch at the shores of far Cathay,
And tropic isles I have never seen.

III.

For I am sick of the sight of home
That never was home, to the heart of me:
The body may stay, but the soul will roam
I've always longed for the open sea.

THY PEOPLE

I.

Thy sword is red, Oh Sultan!
But the moonlight silvers, nightly,
The marble of the palace, where ladies,
 treading lightly
With officers in turban
Weave a scarlet thread of passion—
The perfume of the flowers, and dance
 of latest fashion
Soft music's rhythmic falling
Still the voices that are calling
“Thy sword is red, Oh Sultan!
 And we die, beneath thy ban.”

KISMET

I.

Into the blue that waits outside the door
From out the latticed court, the Sultan goes
The singing of the fountain's voice, no more
Will softly wake him, from a sweet repose.

II.

Or lips of curving crimson, touch his cheek
And in his ear, tell secrets of Stamboul—
'Twill naught avail, for favour there to seek
And who wastes kisses, but an empty fool?

IF, AFTER DAY—

I.

If, after day, the tender twilight holds
Fair tints of purest hue, ethereal rose
That, in the east, in fainting beauty glows
Laved in the largesse of the sun's spent gold—
If, after day, a single silver star
In perfect splendor, dawns upon the night
And all my being answers, at the sight
As though I saw Faith's symbol, there set high
For lovers' eyes, if, after day, I lie,
Wrapped in the dim divinity of dreams
And hear your voice, and live again the hour
That speaks in music, answers in a flower
Making all beauty, all happiness, all tears
Your gift to me—Ah, after day, the dreams!

A DREAM

I.

I had a dream last night
After my tears—
In darkness, dawned a light
Calming my fears—
I saw my own dead child
Moving, with others mild
Holding a light on high,
Turning, to heed my cry
With outstretched arm.

II.

Then, in my dream he spoke
Soft to my woe—
“Mother, when first I woke
Your tears fell so
The light I hold on high
For new soul’s, passing by
Flickered, and would not go—
I come, that you may know,
Such tears do harm.”

TO MY MOTHER

I.

I heard of Heaven—free from strife
For all true souls of perfect will
But you have made the gift of life
So dear, I long to keep it still
All other worlds I would forego
To share this, with the heart I know.

II.

I heard there's nothing lasting here
But permanence above—
Back from that thought I turn in fear
To shelter in your lasting love.
No saint in Paradise could be
What you, on earth, are now, to me.

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